

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-14 and 16 are now present in this application.

The specification and claims 1, 4, 8 and 11 have been amended. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 stands objected to for an informality. In view of the foregoing amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this informality has been addressed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of any objection to the claims are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Baldan, EP 1 077 578 A1, in view of Mills, Jr., U.S. Patent 6,665,529, and Albin, Jr. et al., U.S. Patent 6,704,330. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Baldan in view of Mills, Jr. and Albin, Jr. et al., and further in view of Moore, U.S. Patent 6,035,191. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that the Examiner considers claim 16 to be allowable, and claims 3, 4, 10 and 11 to contain allowable subject matter. Without conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but simply to expedite prosecution of this application, it is noted that the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 3 have been incorporated into independent claim 1 and the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 10 have been incorporated into independent claim 8. In view of the foregoing amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all claims in the instant application should automatically be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

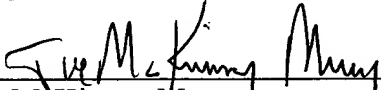
Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By   
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